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which always seemed picturesque to me, a foreigner. It was Zdravka who told me how the women made their garments.

"Women's clothing is made chiefly by hand and of homemade cloth. In the homes we have very few sewing machines, which only the young girls know how to run. Most of the outer garments for men are made by the village tailor. All of us can do the traditional embroidery patterns which make our dresses so pretty, but we do not have as much embroidery now as formerly; the old women cannot see to do it and the young people want modern things."

Then Yurdan told what clothing the peasants bought:

"The women buy *zabradki* [pieces of cloth for the head]; every once in a while they also buy some flannel or silken goods, and shoes. The old women wear *kozhusi* [sheepskin coats], for which they provide the hides or buy them ready-made. Men also have to buy these *kozhusi* in addition to headwear called *kalpatsi* [pointed brimless caps], or cheap cloth caps. Many men buy ready-made suits, especially if they are unmarried, for use on holidays. Even they, when working in the fields, go back to the more durable homemade garments which do not tear so easily. They also buy some shirts and sweaters, or *shubi* [short overcoats with fur inside], and shoes. In general the tendency of the younger people is toward city dress."

I asked them why everybody dressed so much alike. Both of them chuckled and told me about the time the daughter-in-law from the wealthiest peasant household, who had spent some time in Sofia, tried to appear in a distinctive style at a Sunday promenade, only to find that the next Sunday many other girls were wearing the same innovation. Zdravka concluded from this incident:

"No, there is not much individuality in dress, for whenever someone gets something new the others copy it. Especially the young unmarried girls try to buy or to make something new so as to attract attention. But all the rest, as soon as they see it, won't take time to eat until they have made the same thing so that the one possessing it will not feel that she is in a higher position than others. It is this which makes the richer girls most angry."

This led to a discussion of how changes of style had come to the village. This is what Yurdan said:

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"Since the World War there has been much change. Men stopped wearing their narrow white trousers which belted below the hips because they saw during the war that pants that belted above the hips were better. The women changed to lighter clothes because a woman from Vladaya [another village] came with others to visit here, married a Dragalevtsy man, and settled here. Other women saw that the clothes she wore were more convenient and began to adopt the new style."

The tailor's customers brought their own cloth. Five or six of the more fashion-minded young women brought dresses from other villages to be copied. A girl before marriage accumulated about twenty black *sukmani* (jumper dresses), all of the same pattern. She wore out about three of these a year. The men had one black and one rough everyday suit.

Much of the cloth was dyed at home by the peasants with the use of commercial dyes. Black was the universal color for men except in the case of the old style white trousers. If any man deviated from this fashion, people said mockingly, "You are a gypsy," thereby reminding him that he had better act like other people or run the risk of additional social disapproval.

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Shoes in Bulgaria were definitely a sign of social rank. *Tsarvulin* or "sandal-wearer," once a common term for farmer or peasant, has been somewhat displaced by *selenin* or "villager." As a matter of fact, most men in Dragalevtsy continued to wear the pigskin sandals, whereas all self-respecting village women possessed a pair of cheap western shoes. Comically enough, they frequently walked barefoot and carried these uncomfortable badges of status. Just the same, these shoes periodically needed the services of a cobbler, who in Dragalevtsy happened to be the youngest married son of Bai Milush, a highly respected peasant proprietor. Three sons, their wives and progeny comprised part of the twenty people living in Bai Milush's patriarchal dwelling. As the land which will someday be divided up among the sons was limited, each son agreed to specialize along some particular line: the oldest was the dairyman, the middle son was the crop expert, and the youngest married son (and, incidentally, the most delicate in health) was a cobbler, whom the family agreed to send to a trade school in Sofia. Because he drove in his wooden pegs with the best of them, he was building up a profitable business in the village.

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## CHAPTER VIII

# FAMILISM, A CHANGING WAY OF LIFE

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THE DAY at last arrived when I could anticipate the peasants' answers to most of the questions that I asked them. When I inquired what they would do if they had five hundred dollars to spend, I could list in advance the items they would name. The older people, especially, thought and acted largely in terms of the Dragalevtsy of the "good old days," when life was lived in a *familistic* way because the family played the major role in the community. When I understood the characteristics of familism, as a result of observing and reading about peasant life in other parts of the world, the many interesting but isolated facts I had noticed in Dragalevtsy began to make sense and to form a pattern. In a familistic society, whether it is in the Balkans or China, life is largely customary and traditional. Individualism is discouraged because of the crises that the unusual person creates in the daily routine. People prefer a dead uniformity, or a leveling of the best toward the mediocre. The family plays the leading part in this task of molding an individual into the accepted pattern. From childhood to old age the kinship group brings pressure to bear upon any nonconformist, since the family as a whole loses prestige in the community if a member gets out of hand. The family, too, is the chief training ground for the young, and parents cannot blithely transfer any responsibility of this sort to an outside agency such as the school or the church. Village opinion holds the parents accountable.

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Furthermore, economic life is centered about the family. Since family members grow or make for themselves most of the things they need, they depend only to a minor degree upon stores, factories, and other commercial agencies. The family is the productive, distributive, and consumptive unit. This is one reason why village families can weather so many wars and so many depressions: they can satisfy most of their immediate wants at home.

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668 attempted assault was an experience which would be told and retold
186 generation after generation, with some such bitter moral at the end as "And those were our brother Slavs."

668 Perhaps the most important technique of control was the effective
626 play upon the fears of the people. Fearful people are a paralyzed people, and it was this creeping paralysis which was beginning to wear down the opposition and make possible Communism's eventual triumph. Sometimes events reached such a climax that fear was turned into action, but matters in December, 1945, were not reaching such a climax. Little by little the people were being made more fearful of the future, especially with the decline of British and American prestige. One never knew when the walls might have ears, or whom one could trust, or when one's home would be invaded and searched. One woman Communist spread a story about a neighbor's hoarding; he was twice arrested and his house searched three times, although the rumor was apparently unfounded. Grudges were sometimes "settled" when one of the parties tipped off the authorities to the failure of the other party to follow some unpopular regulation. Accompanying this fear was the belief that one would not have due protection of the law at a trial, since the new law was being written as cases came up, with little reference to prewar statutes or precedents. One was at the mercy of the court where the all-important question too often had become, "Did you or did you not fight against the Fascist German hordes?" Conceivably in the not-too-distant future the "sixty-four dollar question" might be, "Have you ever been sympathetic to Anglo-American interventionists and reactionaries?"*

When I asked my Communist acquaintances how they justified the interpretation of justice which I have been describing, they flashed back, as though well drilled: "But in America does the Negro or the poor man get justice? Don't the courts serve the interests of the rich? Here in Bulgaria our courts do not serve the interests of the privileged, but rather the good of the masses." I already knew that some of these Communist converts had been motivated by the highest idealism, that they felt they had a remedy for the economic and political evils of their country, and that any means they used to correct those evils would

* An observation made in 1946, which has become only too true in 1948.

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be justified in their opinion. They argued further that all social change was costly, and they firmly believed that the time was ripe for change, their kind of a change.

Many of them felt confident of the future, but some qualified their anticipation by saying, "It all depends upon America and England. If we are left alone, we can work matters out. We want no interference." And as I reviewed the methods by which they attained their present dominant position nationally in the face of hostile opinion in many quarters, I could see that if left alone for a long enough period, they would succeed in instituting the changes they wanted, whatever might be the cost. They controlled the national government and could rely upon Russia for help whenever needed; they were making headway with the young people; they increasingly directed the chief decisions made by village councils and through these councils and secret police knew what was happening throughout the land; they had control over the radio and were biding their time until they could also control the press completely; education was a function of the national government; economic dependence of the peasants upon the local and national authorities was increasing, and there were both tangible and intangible rewards for Communist party membership; fears could be aroused or played down as the government desired, and courts had become not the servant of abstract justice but the instrument of the state.

The time element was of utmost importance. Before the Russian armies left Bulgarian soil upon the conclusion of the peace treaty, the Communists had to have everything well in hand or face the possibility that dissatisfied cliques in the old Bulgarian army could step in to throw the Communists out and set up a military dictatorship which, while anti-Russian, would certainly have few of the earmarks of the democracy known in the West. It would be a recrudescense of irredentist nationalism, and Bulgaria would be on sale to the highest bidder promising to keep the Russian bear at bay. Without the army the Agrarians, who had a realistic, well-thought-out program, would be powerless; but reliance upon the army for a long period would negate most of their plans and make them the bulwark of a dictatorship which they professed to abhor. Such was the unfortunate dilemma

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668 578 554 178 do. Owing to the Communistic agitation in Dragalevtsy, lines were more sharply drawn between the peasants on the one hand and the artisans on the other. Most of the artisans had learned their trade in Sofia, had been subjected to city influences, and many of them had become acquainted with Communist ideas there before the war. Even Bai Milosh, the village patriarch so frequently mentioned in this account, had a son who had become an ardent Communist. This son was not the one who took over the management of field crops, nor the one responsible for the livestock. Instead he had become a cobbler. He thought of himself as a worker, whereas his brothers thought of themselves as farmers.

668 578 178 [888] Quarreling between the young and old also characterized the factionalism. Although the Agrarian young people opposed the Communists, they were certainly influenced by the actions of their more progressive or radical contemporaries. The older peasants who were opposed to the present regime emphasized time and time again the danger of having young people run the affairs of the land. This displacement of the aged rather than the indifference of Communists to God seemed to be causing the gravest concern to those who had been steeped in the traditional way of life.

668 179 126 But factionalism was not the only pronounced change which I noted. I found everywhere an insecurity which was foreign to the Dragalevtsy I had once known. The opposition supporters could be expected to feel insecure, for they had to face the possibility that Communism would carry the day. But even the Communists who were definitely in the good graces of the party were having many troubled moments. The wife of one Communist was active in the opposition, and when I asked him why he tolerated such political division in his family he simply laughed. I continued to question him: "Aren't you the boss in this family? Why do you let your wife have such independence?"

He then became deadly serious and sought to lead me out of my cloud of ignorance. "You see, it's this way. Suppose the Communists are overthrown. Where would I be then? But if my wife is active in the Agrarian group, she can then speak for me and get me out of trouble."

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But some of the peasants who turned Communists were having their days of religious doubt. They asked quite frequently, "Can we be Communists and still believe in God?" They voluntarily sent their children to the priest's class in religion held in the schoolhouse. "And the Communist children know their lessons better than the children of the opposition," was the opinion of a member of the intelligentsia.

The ideas of many new converts to the Marxist doctrine had been rudely shaken the previous summer at the time of the church processional for rain. The drought had been devastating. Corn was drying up; pastures were turning brown. So a band of villagers, with some Communists who went along for old times' sake, accompanied the priest on a circuit of the fields. The boys carried the church relics and the priest walked faithfully along in his hot, black vestments. No rain came and the Communists thoroughly enjoyed scoffing at those who had started out with such bright hopes. Conditions grew worse and worse, so the religious leaders thought another processional in order. The whole performance was repeated, with Communists along again. This time the priest went up high on the mountainside, so as to include village properties not previously visited. His prayers were efficacious, for a shower which later turned to steady rain burst forth upon the band of villagers, wetting them to the skin before they could return to shelter in the village. The religious people thus had the last word when atheism was discussed.

The prevalent feeling of insecurity included more, however, than beliefs and basic attitudes about religion and politics. It stemmed also from the economic uncertainty which characterized the period. Always lurking in the peasant's consciousness was the fear that his holding, his precious acres, would be collectivized as was done in Russia. It mattered not to him that his farming was inefficiently done or that such inefficiency was no solution for the overpopulation which characterized his land. He wanted no part of a great impersonal *kolkhoz* where in the long run he would become a worker instead of an owner, or where he would work land which he could not call his own. That to him was serfdom; it was not freedom. And discussions of these topics trailed off into many beside-the-point objections, which

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668 nevertheless seemed important to the peasant. I recall one such
178 discussion which dealt with the idea of a shortened work-week at the
626 factories. The peasants disapproved of the whole plan and used it
423 as a basis for condemning land collectivization because "We want to
829 be able to work as long as we want without having people tell us that we have to stop working."

Peasants were greatly confused, therefore, over the farm policies to be pursued in the next two or three years. They planned and schemed and talked endlessly about what they should plant, what they should do about their debts, or whether the aged fathers should distribute their land to their sons before they died. But always there was the great unknown of government policy which upset their calculations and kept them insecure.

668 Another important social change was occuring in the institutional
178 pattern of Dragalevtsy. In earlier chapters we noted how the en-
596 croachment of the state was making considerable impact upon the traditional familistic patterns, while economic life was becoming more commercialized and religious activities were declining in importance. The coming of the Communists had begun to weaken the family ties even further, for the Fatherland Front had given votes to all women and had thus attacked the dogma of male supremacy; it had honored the young at the expense of the aged; and it had turned brother against brother as the struggle for control grew more bitter. As the representative of the central government, the Fatherland Front was affecting an even larger area of life than the prewar regime did, especially when its economic regulations and its threat to the hallowed traditional system of landownership.

668 Another disturbing effect was the substitution of Moscow as
771 the center of the universe, for the Communist adherents at least, when
178 formerly Dragalevtsy or perhaps Sofia by courtesy was thought to be
829 the center. These innovations of the present government had done much to prejudice it in the eyes of the people, who made decisions not upon the basic issues which the government was striving to champion, but resisted blindly and perhaps fanatically simply because the new regime spelled the end of their way of life. As they realized this, some of the peasants turned more and more to the church, the institu-

6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe
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ration. At any rate, the Holy Synod was soon reechoing every banal attack on Anglo-American imperialism and applauding every appeal for the Moscow version of "peace." In the summer of 1949, its official journal expressed regret that the center of Roman Catholicism (the Vatican) and the heartland of Protestantism (the United States) had of their own free will blessed a new war and sung the praises of the atomic bomb.

These various attitudes received final binding expression in the series of resolutions on relations between Church and State which the Holy Synod adopted on September 20, 1948: the clergy were authorized to join pro-Communist organizations and to support the collective farm system; government decrees prohibiting the teaching of religion in the schools were endorsed; all priests were warned not to make any statement from their pulpits which might be considered to be political. The Synod assured the government that it stood ready to cooperate in any measure "for the reform of society in accordance with the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity." For the seventieth birthday of Stalin it addressed a letter, dated December 12, 1949, to all pastors urging them to conduct Divine services for the welfare of the great Russian leader. It also formally endorsed the peace plea with all its might and main.

Yet all this does not mean that the rank and file of the Bulgarian Orthodox clergy betrayed their faith without a struggle. It took the pro-Communist Union of Orthodox Priests a long while to recruit members. Watched constantly by the security police, removed from office for dissident attitudes, often sent to slave-labor camps, the clergy witnessed with foreboding the working out of policies designed to seduce youth, secularize all welfare activity, and subject all preaching, whether oral or written, to censorship by an uncompromisingly Marxist ideological authority. Eventually only one theological school, at Plovdiv, was permitted to remain open. Two theological jour-

6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe
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nals, one of them the organ of the Communist-dominated Synod, made propaganda at the government's behest. Everyone who gave any indication of fidelity to the Christian creed in its true significance and glory had to reckon with the possibility that he would speedily be sentenced to one of the dreaded prisons—Kolarovgrad, for example—which were always crammed with the unfortunate victims of tyranny.

The Orthodox Church having been transformed into an abject lackey of the State, Communist wrath descended on the religious minorities. Protestants were the first victims. Missionaries had come to Bulgaria from Turkey, and had established schools which, despite wars and upheavals, gave a good education to boys and girls. An exemplary woman introduced the kindergarten system and trained native teachers. By the close of World War I, hostility to Protestants had pretty largely died down; and although the small congregations did not grow rapidly they successfully maintained their identities. Their pride and joy was the American College, situated near Sofia. It was closed by the Nazis in 1942 and has not been reopened. The work of the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. was suppressed at the same time, and the Communist regime has not lifted the prohibition.

The legislation adopted during February, 1949 (often referred to as the Canonical Purity Laws) contained a number of provisions designed to render impossible any religious activity under the auspices of a Church or institution with headquarters outside Bulgaria. It stipulated, for example, that any Church or any clergyman desiring "canonical relations with or aid or gifts from" institutions, organizations, or official personages abroad must secure permission in advance from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. It was presumably under this legislation that fifteen Protestant pastors were brought to trial for high treason during 1949. It was the first large-scale action